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A

Funeral Sermon

For the late REVEREND

ISAAC WATTS, D. D.

232



237.
A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the

D E A T H

Of the late REVEREND

Isaac Watts, D. D.

PREACHED to the

CHURCH of which he was PASTOR.

December 11, 1748. *K*

By *DAVID FENNINGS.*

To which is added,

The FUNERAL ORATION at
his INTERMENT.

By *SAMUEL CHANDLER.*

Both Published at the Request of the said CHURCH.

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Price Six-pence.

SEERMON

Of the last Judgment

DEATH

By the late Rev. Mr. [illegible]

WILLIAM WALKER



Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields

By [illegible]

MINERAL ORATION

By [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

HEB. xi. 4.

-----By it, he being dead yet speaketh.

IT is with some peculiar Propriety, that these Words may be applied to the present Occasion, and I may say, *This Day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears*; for he, whose Death we are now called to improve, may be considered as yet speaking to you, not only by the Example of his Life, the instructive Remembrance of which will I hope be always dear to you, but also, by his many excellent Writings; on account of which if I am not greatly deceived, the same Thing will be said of him in far distant ages, that is said of *Abel*, in our Text, that *he being dead, yet speaketh*. While he is now celebrating the Honours of God, and of the Lamb, in the *new Songs* of Heaven, how many thousands of pious Worshippers are this Day lifting up their Hearts to God, in the sacred Songs, that he taught them upon Earth. Though his *Voice* is not *any longer heard by us*, yet *his Words*, like those of the *Day and the Night*, are gone out to the *End of the World* (a). *America* and *Europe*

A 2

still

(a) Psal. xix. 4.

still hear him speak, and it is highly probable they may continue to do so till *Europe* and *America* shall be no more; and that latest Posterity, will have Cause to bless God for the Writings of Doctor WATTS, as well as for the Example of *Abel's* Faith, by which *he being dead yet speaketh*.

Abel was the second Son of *Adam* who having by his Fall brought down the same Doom on his Posterity as on himself, viz. that in the Sweat of their Brows they should eat their Bread (b); took care to teach his Sons those useful Occupations, by which they might earn their Livelihood. Accordingly his Eldest Son *Cain*, became a Tiller of the Ground, and *Abel* a Keeper of Sheep. Gen. iv. 2. And as *Adam* and *Eve*, who were the first Sinners, were probably also the first Instances of Divine Grace in their Repentance and Pardon, there is no Doubt but they carefully instructed their Children in the Knowledge and Worship of God. But with how different Success! How contrary were the Characters of these two Brothers! *Cain* proves a very wicked Man, and *Abel* a very Good Man. Nevertheless the good Principles which had been instilled into them in their Education, so far prevailed with both, that *Cain* as well as *Abel* kept up an outward Form of Religion; and accordingly he brought of the Fruit of the Ground, an Offering

(b) Gen. iii. 19.

Offering to the Lord, and Abel, he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock. ver. 3, and 4. The History further informs us, that *the Lord had respect unto Abel and his Offering, but unto Cain and his Offering he had not respect.* The Reason of which does not seem to be that which has been assigned by the Generallity of Jewish Writers, and even by several Christians; viz. that *Cain's Offering* was in itself *meaner* or *less* than his Brother's; for God himself, who best knew why he rejected the Former, while he accepted the Latter, seems to tell us by his Apostle, that it was because of the Difference he observed in the Hearts of these two Brothers, and because of the different Principles on which they acted: It was by *Faith* that *Abel offered a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain.* It is however alleged, that *Abel* is said to have brought of the *Firstlings of his Flock and of the Fat thereof*, or of the *best* of them, as the Hebrew Word, there used, does often signify; whereas no such thing is said of *Cain's Offering*, but only that he brought of the *Fruit of the Ground*; and from thence it is infered that he did not bring the *Best* of what he had, as *Abel* did. But possibly the Reason, why the *Best* is not mentioned in the Account of *Cain's Offering*, as well as his Brother's, might be that there was no such difference between one Parcel of his Corn and another (which is what I suppose

we are to understand by *the Fruit of the Ground*) as there was between *Abel's* Lambs; So that it might be an indifferent Thing, from which Heap he took his Offering. Therefore it cannot be concluded from hence, with any Certainty, that his Oblation was not as Good in its Kind, as his Brother's. Nor yet is it certain, that *Abel's* Oblation was larger, and on that Account, of more Value than *Cain's*. It does plainly appear indeed, that *Abel* brought a *double* Oblation, and *Cain* only a single ~~one~~ (c). For the Hebrew Word (*Mincha*) which we render Offering in that Text, does always in the Law of *Moses* signify some Vegetable Produce, as Flour, Wine, Oil and the like; which Things were offered to God, in Testimony of their Acknowledgement of his Providence, and their Thankfulness for the Bounties of it. Of this Sort was *Cain's* Offering. And *Abel* also brought an Offering of the same Kind; for it is said *the Lord had respect to Abel and to his Offering.* (or *Mincha*). But besides that, he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock; so that his was a *fuller* Oblation, as the Greek Word (*πρωτα*) which we render *more excellent*, in the Verse of my Text, may probably signify. And hence his

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(c) The Reader may see this largely proved with satisfactory Evidence, by the Reverend Mr. *Kennicot*, in his ingenuous and learned Dissertation on the Oblations of *Cain* and *Abel*; to which I am indebted for some valuable Hints in explaining this Text.

Oblation is exprest by *Gifts*, in the Plural Number — *God testifying of his Gifts*. But still, though *Abel* brought a *double* Oblation, it does not follow, that his *two* Offerings were more in Quantity or Value, than his Brother's *one*. Or if they were, what is more or less, better or worse, of all created Goods unto Him, who has an infinite Fulness of all Happiness in Himself? and who says by the Mouth of *David*, *Every Beast of the Forest is mine, and the Cattle upon a thousand Hills; I know all the Fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beasts of the Field are mine; if I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the Fulness thereof* (d)? But now, if we consider, what was the chief Intent of those Animal bloody Sacrifices (especially of the Whole Burnt-Offerings, of which Sort I take *Abel's* to have been) viz. to prefigure and typefy the Sacrifice of Christ to the Faith of the Old Testament-Believers, we shall easily perceive, wherein the grand Difference lay betwixt the Oblations of these two Brothers; how it was by *Faith* that *Abel* offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*, and how by it, as it follows in my Text, *he being dead yet Speaketh*.

In treating of these Words I would endeavour, in an humble Dependance on the Spirit of Light and Grace

I. To

(d) Psal. 1. 10.

I. To shew you what *that* was, by which *Abel* is said even yet to speak.

II. What we are to understand by his yet speaking; and what those Lessons of Instruction are, which he may be said to be still teaching us.

I. Let us enquire what *that* was, by which *Abel* is said even yet to Speak.

It was by *it* (*δι' αὐτῆς*) says the Text, by which some understand *his Sacrifice*; but I take the more natural Antecedent to be, *his Faith*. However the Difference is not very Material, since his Sacrifice was the Expression of his Faith, and it was his Faith that gave the superior Excellence and Virtue to his Sacrifice, above that of his Brother's. So that in short, it was his Faith, as expressed by his Sacrifice. However it may not be improper to consider each of these distinctly.

1st. His Faith. As an illustrious instance of which Grace, he stands in this Chapter, at the Head of the Catalogue of the most eminent Believers of the Old Testament Ages. Now it cannot be thought, that *Cain* was wholly destitute of all religious Faith, but that he also believed the Being and the Providence of God; since otherwise he would have had no Reason, or Motive to bring him

him any Oblation: and in Testimony of the same Faith, and the same thankful Acknowledgment of the bounty of Providence, *Abel* also brought a *Mincha*, that is, an *Offering of the Fruit of the Ground*, as well as his Brother. But then further, and besides that, *he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock*, and offered a bloody Sacrifice in Testimony of his Faith in the Promise of *the Seed of the Woman*, and of his Dependance upon the Virtue of that great attoning Sacrifice for Sin, which this promised Redeemer was to offer in due Time. We need not surely suppose, that *Adam* and his Family had no more Knowledge of the Saviour, that was to come, and of the Sacrifice, that he was to offer, than merely what they could spell out of that first dark Promise of *the Seed of the Woman, that shall bruise the Serpent's head.* Gen. iii. 15. But it is much more probable, that by this time God had enlarged the Discovery of his Grace to fallen Man, by many more and clearer Promises, than that first. For we are to consider, that while as yet there was no written Bible, immediate Revelations were much more frequent, than in later Ages; and we can hardly imagine, that we have an Account of all the Revelations with which God was pleased to favour the Patriarchs, in that very short History which is transmitted down to us, of their Times. Now it is very likely, that

the ordinary Method of God's gracious Dealings with Men, in order to their Salvation, might be pretty much the same then, as now, when generally speaking, penitent Sinners are raised to Hope and Comfort by Degrees. So we may suppose, that when our first Parents repented, God did at first a little encourage their Hope, by a Promise, though as yet obscurely delivered, of a Saviour to come ; but after their Repentance was more confirmed, there is little room to doubt but that he would further encourage and enliven their Hope, and that he gave them stronger Consolation, by larger and fuller Discoveries of that way of Salvation, he had prepared ; and more especially by informing them of that great appointed Deliverer who was to *finish Transgression, and make an End of Sin, and bring in an everlasting Righteousness*, and upon whom they might even now securely trust. This I apprehend was the chief Object of *Abel's* Faith ; so that his Faith regarded the Death and Attonement of Christ, as expressed and testified by the typical Rite of a bloody Sacrifice : whereas *Cain*, though he believed the Being and Providence of God, and accordingly brought an Oblation to express his thankfulness for temporal Blessings, yet he had no such humbling Sense of Sin, as to see his Need of an Attonement for it, or however, not so as practically to trust upon that only Attonement, which God had
pro-

provided and appointed, and to comply with the Method which he had instituted for obtaining an Interest in the Virtue of it. In short, the Difference betwixt *Cain* and *Abel*, seems not much unlike that of the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, in the Parable, Luke xviii. 10. The one, though like *Cain* he believed the Being and Providence of God, yet had little or no Sense of his Sins against Him, and was so vainly conceited of his own Righteousness and Goodness, that he saw no Need so much as to ask for Mercy; whilst the other, like *Abel*, with the humble Heart of a Penitent, under a deep Conviction of Guilt and Sin, smites upon his Breast, and cries, *God be merciful to me a Sinner.* *This Man went down to his House justified rather than the other.* And for much the same Reason, did *Abel* offer unto God a more excellent Sacrifice, in his Account, than *Cain*.

2dly. Let us consider his *sacrificing*, by which he expressed, not only his *Faith*, but his *Obedience* unto God. As he thankfully accepted that Salvation, which God had so graciously proposed; so he was most heartily willing to receive it in God's own Way, and to comply with and use whatever Means he was pleased to appoint for obtaining it. And among these Means, which God had instituted, I must reckon the Rite of sacrificing, since otherwise I cannot conceive how that Rite should ever have been introduced into

the World. Would Reason suggest, that the killing and burning of a Beast should compensate to God for the Wrongs that Man had done to his Honour? What Connection can we conceive, betwixt these brutal Sacrifices, and the Pardon of Sin, otherwise, than as they were typical Representations of the promised Sacrifice of Christ, intended to preserve the Memory of that Promise, and to give Occasion to the Exercise of Faith upon it? And if so, we can hardly doubt but they were instituted by him, by whom the Promise was made. And besides, if we consider how expressly God has declared against Will-worship in other Cases; what strict Orders he gave the *Jews* by *Moses*, that *whatever he had commanded them, they should observe, and do, without adding to it or diminishing from it.* (Deut. xii. 32.) And also, how awfully he punished *Nadab* and *Abihu*, whom he struck dead upon the Spot, for presuming to *burn Incense with strange Fire, which the Lord commanded them not,* (Levit. x. 12.) can it be thought, that if the Rite of sacrificing had been the Invention of Man, as some have supposed, God would have ever approved of it in his own Worship? Nay and afterwards adopted it into his Law? And that he would have *testified of Abel's Gifts*, and regarded them so graciously, as he did. Nor can I see, how *Abel* could have sacrificed in Faith, if he had

no divine Institution for that Rite, nor Promise connected with it, to build his Faith upon. I make no Question therefore, but Sacrifices were originally of divine Institution. So that we are to account of *Abel's* sacrificing, not only as an Expression and Testimony of his Faith, but as an Act of his Obedience to a divine Institution and Command. While *Cain* might very likely despise those sacrificial Rites, and presume upon his own Merit and Righteousness before God, good *Abel*, with an humbler Mind, is glad to accept of Pardon and Salvation, in the Way that God had appointed; he will never pretend to be more wise, than his Maker, but resolves to follow every Direction, to comply with every Institution, and to obey every Command of God. Thus you see, what *that* was by which *Abel* is said yet to speak, *viz.* his Faith in the Sacrifice and Attonement of Christ, and his Obedience to the Will of God. We are now,

II. To enquire what is meant by his *yet speaking*, and what these Lessons of Instruction are, which he may be said to be yet teaching us.

Some, I know, refer his speaking, merely to the Cry of his Blood for Vengeance on his Murderer, Gen. iv. 10. But then it should rather have been said, that *he did speak*

speak, viz. untill Vengeance was executed
 on his Brother, than that he *does yet* speak.
 And besides, *it, si autem*, by which he speak-
 eth, evidently refers not to his Blood, but
 to his Faith. Therefore I take the Mean-
 ing to be, that the History of *Abel's* Faith,
 which he expressed by his Sacrificing, and of
 the Acceptableness of it to God, is written
 for our Instruction and Imitation; it is what
 we may call a very speaking Story. For

1st. It speaks the Sovereignty and Free-
 ness of the distinguishing Grace of God, that
he will have Mercy on whom he will have
Mercy. For in this History we see two
 Brothers, and brought up under the same
 Instruction and Discipline; or if one had any
 Advantage above the other from the Parents
 Care, no Doubt but it was *Cain* their First-
 Born; yet this, when he grows to be a Man,
 proves a wicked Murtherer, *Abel* the younger
 Brother a Pattern of Piety. Now what was
 it that made this vast Difference? How came
Abel to be so much better than his Brother?
 It was his *Faith*, that Faith which is of *the*
Operation of God, and which is said to be
given to the Saints. Col. ii. 12. Phil. i. 29.
 Will any tell us, that the difference between
 these two Brothers, as to their Religious Cha-
 racter, was owing to their different natural
 Disposition and Temper, by which one was
 better disposed to Sobriety, Seriousness and
 Virtue, than the other? I would ask, how
 came

came their natural Tempers so widely to differ? Did not *one God make them both?* and could not he foresee what each of their Tempers would incline and lead them to? Suppose then that *Abel* was thus happily distinguished from his Brother, by his natural Make and Constitution, must we not in *that* acknowledge the Sovereignty of God? And why then may we not as well ascribe his Goodness and Piety to distinguishing Grace, as to distinguishing Nature? Does not righteous *Abel* therefore seem to speak to every true Believer, as in the Words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? — By the Grace of God, I am what I am.*

2dly. *Abel's* History may further instruct us in the true, and indeed the only Way, of a Sinner's obtaining Reconciliation and Acceptance with God. It is through Faith, that same Faith which *Abel* expressed by his typical Sacrifice. And to this the Apostle also gives *his* Testimony, Ephes. ii. 8. *By Grace ye are saved through Faith.* And let it be further observed, that *Abel* justified his Faith, or proved it to be sincere and genuine, by his Obedience to God, and his complying with every Divine Institution; and no other Faith will avail us, for the Pardon of our Sins and our Acceptance with God, but such as his was.

3dly.

3dly. There is nothing, that *Abel* does now speak more plainly, than the Honours of exalted Piety, and of eminent Service for God, and for Souls. These are Things, that will enoble a Man beyond all Things else, which will make him to be loved of God, and will render him most useful to Men. And not only will they be the Means of exalting him to distinguished Honour and Glory in the World to come; but they will probably immortalize his Name upon Earth, so far as Immortality can consist with a perishing World.

The most illustrious Actions of several ancient Heroes, by which they sought to eternalize their Names, were such, as in a right Judgment, render them rather infamous than honourable. We read of the Victories and Triumphs of an *Alexander*, and a *Cæsar* with Horror, and are glad, that our Lot was not cast in their Days, and that we are not under the Power of such oppressive Tyrants. But with how different a Lustre does the Character of righteous *Abel* shine through a long Succession of Ages? How much more do the short Memoirs of his Life redound to his Honour, than whole Volumes of flattering Praises, that have been bestowed on those Ravagers of the Nations, redound to theirs?

It is doubtless an Honour to *Abel*, that his Name and Memory are preserved in the sacred Scriptures. Though I cannot think, this is all that is intended by his yet
speaking;

speaking; as some understand it, and accordingly render the Text, as in the Margin of the English Bible, *He is yet spoken of*; because this might be equally said of all the rest, whose Names are inserted in this Catalogue of Believers. But it is *Abel's* distinguished Honour, that his Faith is recorded for a Pattern to all future Generations, that Sinners may learn from him, how to obtain the Favour of God, and be accepted of him. It is *his Honour*, that he not only *was* but *still is*, a most useful Man; useful to Multitudes by leading them to the Knowledge of God and Salvation, through a Redeemer. His Faith and his Works still praise him, and *by them, he being dead, yet speaketh*. Such Usefulness as this brings not only a lasting, but a growing Honour: for must we not conceive, that every Soul, that has been helped to find the Way to Heaven since *Abel's* time, by the Light of his Example, has brought a new Accession to his Honour and his Joy? Whether departed Souls have any Knowledge of the Affairs of this World; and if they have, by what Means that Knowledge is communicated to them, are Matters of Doubt and Uncertainty. Yet I cannot but observe, that the Parable of the rich Man and *Lazarus*, Luke xvi. 19. seems in part to be built on the Supposition, that separate Souls are not altogether ignorant of what is doing here; for

there the Soul of the rich Sinner in Hell, is supposed to know that his Brethren were still living in their Father's House, and that they still went on in the same careless and evil Course, as when he was with them. Now if damned Souls in Hell have any Knowledge of the Affairs of this World, it will be hard to suppose that such Knowledge is altogether hid from the Blessed in Heaven. May we not then suppose, that the spreading happy Influence of *Abel's* Example, even after his Death, may still be a Matter of his increasing Joy? For if there is *Joy among the Angels in Heaven, when a Sinner on Earth repenteth*; how much more, may we naturally suppose, must *that* be an occasion of Joy to such glorified Saints as have been the more immediate Instruments of their Repentance and Salvation? With what Pleasure to themselves, and with what adoring Thankfulness to the Grace of God, do they now behold the happy Influence and Success of their former Lives and Labours? If you will admit the Supposition, which some have made, that such wicked Men as have corrupted others by their Example, or by their Writings, will have their Torment increased, in Proportion to the Mischief they do, even after they are dead; it may surely be much rather supposed, that such who like *Abel*, are yet speaking to Sinners for their spiritual and eternal Good, shall yet

yet have their Happiness increased, in Proportion to the Good they still do; and that while *they rest from their Labours, their Works still follow them*, to their growing Honour, and are continually producing new Rewards of Glory. But whether they have the same *present* Knowledge that Angels have, of the Repentance and Conversion of Sinners in this World, or not, I can make no Doubt but that hereafter they will be fully informed of all the Good, that God has honoured them with doing, or that he has been pleased to do by them. And oh! what exquisite Satisfaction and Joy will it yield a Person, who out of fervent Love to Christ, and tender Compassion to the Souls of Men, had laid out his Life in unwearied Labours for his Honour and their Salvation; to find hereafter that God has blest his Endeavours with abundant Success: What a growing Joy must it afford him to know, that what he formerly did for Christ and for Souls is still a Means of adding new Subjects to the Heavenly Kingdom? With what peculiar Pleasure will he wellcome every Soul to Heaven, whom he has been the Means of helping thither? And then, at last, when all the Elect shall be gathered into the Kingdom; in that most important Day, when St. *Paul* promised himself so much Honour and Joy, upon meeting with the Multitudes, which had been brought to

Christ and to Glory through his Ministry; as in 2 Thes. ii. 19. *What is our Hope, or Joy, or Crown of Rejoicing? Are not even Ye in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? For Ye are our Glory and Joy.* Then shall these faithful Servants of God, whom he had before honoured with making them eminently Useful in his Kingdom of Grace, be distinguished with peculiar Honours in the Kingdom of Glory. *Then they that be wise, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars forever and ever.* Dan. xii. 3.

And now, that I may apply my Text more directly to the present Occasion, and that you may see what you should be yet learning from your Disceased Pastor, from his Life as well as from his Writings; it is proper that I should lay before you some brief Memoirs of his Life and Character. Here I will be very watchful over my own Heart, that my Esteem and Affection for that Great and Good Man, whose Friendship for many Years I shall always Account to be one of the greatest Blessings of my Life, may not in any Instance lead me aside from the most impartial Regard to Truth.

Dr. ISAAC WATTS was Born at *Southampton*, July 17, 1674. of Parents who were Eminent for Religion, and were considerable

siderable Sufferers for Conscience Sake, in the
 Persecution of the Protestant Dissenters, in
 King *Charles the Second's* Reign. The un-
 common Genius of this their Son appeared
 betimes; for he began to learn *Latin* at four
 Years Old; in the Knowledge of which, as
 well as of the *Greek* Language, he made a swift
 Progress, under the Care of the Reverend
 Mr. *Pinborne*, a Clergyman of the Establish-
 ed Church; to whom the Doctor has in-
 scribed an ingenious *Latin* Ode, in his *Horæ*
Lyricæ. He was early taken Notice of for
 the Sprightliness and Vivacity of his Wit;
 Talents which too often prove fatal Snares
 to Young Persons: But he through the dis-
 tinguishing Grace of God, was not only
 preserved from Criminal Follies, but had a
 deep Sense of Religion upon his Heart be-
 times. In the Year 1690. he was sent up
 to *London* for Academical Education, where
 he was placed under the Tuition of the
 Reverend Mr. *Thomas Rowe*; to whom also
 he has inscribed an Ode in his *Horæ Lyricæ*.
 I have been credibly informed, that while
 he resided in this Colledge of Learning, his
 Behaviour was not only so Inoffensive, that
 his Tutor declared, he never once gave him
 any Occasion for Reproof; but so Exem-
 plary, that he often proposed him as a Pat-
 tern to his other Pupils for their Imitation.
 In the Year 1693. he joined in Commu-
 nion with the Church, of which his worthy
 Tutor

Tutor was Pastor. When he had finished his Course of Studies at the Academy, he returned to his Father's House, where he spent two Years more in *reading Meditation and Prayer*, in Order to his being further qualified and fitted for that great Work, to which he was determined to devote his Life, and of the awful Importance of which he had a deep Sense upon his Mind. From hence he was Invited in the Year 1696. by that eminently Pious and Learned Gentleman, Sir *John Hartop* Baronet, Deceased, to reside in his Family at *Stoke-Newington*, as Tutor to his Son, the present *Sir John*; where he continued four Years, and where his Behaviour won him such Esteem and Respect, as laid the Foundation of that intimate Friendship, which subsisted between his worthy Pupil and him to the Day of his Death.

But while he assisted Sir *John's* Studies, he did not neglect his own; for not only did he further improve himself in those Branches of Learning, in which, more especially, he assisted his Pupil; but applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures in the Original Tongues, and the best Commentators, both Critical and Practical.

He began to Preach on his Birth-day, 1698. and was the same Year chosen Assistant to the Reverend Dr. *Isaac Chauncy*, then Pastor of this Church. But his Public Labours,

bours, which met with general Acceptance, were soon after interrupted by a threatening Illness for five Months; which was thought to be occasioned by the Fervour of his Zeal in Preaching the glorious Gospel of Christ. However that did not discourage him from returning to his delightful Work, as soon as God was pleased to restore his Health.

In *January 1701*. he received a Call from this Church, to succeed *Dr. Chauncy* in the Pastoral Office; which he signified his Acceptance of the very Day that King *William* died, notwithstanding the discouraging Prospect which that Event gave to Men of his Profession, and the Fears with which it filled the Hearts of Protestant Dissenters at that Time. But he had *set his Hand to the Plow, and would not look back*. Accordingly, he was solemnly Ordained to the Pastoral Office, *March 18* following.

But the Joy of the Church, in their happy Settlement, was soon after damped, by his being seized with a painful and threatening Illness, which laid him by for some Time, and from which he recovered by slow Degrees. Upon which they saw it needful to provide him with a stated Assistant. Accordingly the Reverend *Mr. Samuel Price*, your present worthy Pastor, was chosen to that Service, in *July, 1703*.

But notwithstanding his Publick Labours were by this Means eased, his Health remained

mained very fluctuating and tender for some Years. However as it increased, he renewed his Diligence in fulfilling his Ministry; and how were you delighted and edified with his Sermons in Publick, and with his entertaining and profitable Conversation in the Visits which he made to your Families! It was in this Season of his more confirmed Health, that he formed a Society of the Younger Members of his Church, for Prayer and Religious Conference; to whom he delivered the Substance of that excellent Book, which he afterwards published, under the Title of, *A Guide to Prayer*. Now he went on, without any considerable Interruption, in his Work, and with great Success and Prosperity to his Church, till the Year 1712. when, in the Month of *September*, he was visited with a violent Fever, which broke his Constitution, and left such Weakness upon his Nerves, as continued with him, in some Measure, to his dying Day. Upon this Occasion, *Prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him*; several Days of Prayer were kept on his Account, in which many of his Brethren in the Ministry assisted, and wrestled earnestly with God for the Continuance of so valuable a Life; and God has been graciously pleased to answer their Prayers, by adding to his Life more than thirty-six Years; the most of them Years, though of feeble Health, yet

yet of eminent Usefulness to his Church and to the World. It was not till *October* 1716. that he was able to return to his publick Ministry. In the mean time his Assistant Mr. *Price*, was, at his Desire, and upon his Recommendation, chosen by the Church, to be joint Pastor with him; to which Office he was ordained, *March* 3. 1713. I hope I may be allowed, without Offence, or Appearance of Flattery, to recite a Clause in Dr. WATTS's last Will, in Testimony of that inviolable Friendship which has always subsisted between your two worthy Pastors; and which has contributed so much to their mutual Comfort and Honour, and to your Establishment and Edification. Dr. WATTS styles him, " His faithful Friend and Companion in the Labours of the Ministry : " and mentions a Legacy that he leaves him, " as only a small Testimony, of his great Affection for him, on Account of his Services of Love during the many harmonious Years of their Fellowship in the Work of the Gospel."

But though this long Interval of Sicknes was, on some Accounts, a very melancholy Season, yet a kind Providence made it to be the happiest Æra of his Life, as it was the Occasion of introducing him into the Family of a late excellent Person, * who, on a

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Prin-

* *Sir Thomas Abney*, Knight and Alderman of *London*.

Principle of the most generous Friendship and Compassion, took him, in a very languishing State of Health, to his own House; where from that Moment, to the Day of his Death, he was abundantly supplied, with all that could Minister, either to the Convenience or Satisfaction of his Life. For though this remarkable Friend of Ministers, of the Church of God, and of his Country died in the Year 1722. the benevolent Spirit he manifested, survived in his worthy Relict, and was inherited by his Children. It would be Presumption in me to attempt to recount the numberless Instances of that “ generous and tender Care, (as the Doctor expresses it in his last Will) shown him by her Ladyship and her Family, “ in his long Illness, many years ago, when “ he was capable of no Service; and also “ of her eminent Friendship and Goodness, “ during his Continuance in the Family “ ever since.” Yet this I will venture to say, in Allusion to the Blessing, which our Lord pronounced on the good Woman, in the Gospel, who had bestowed a Box of precious Ointment on him; that wheresoever Dr. WATTS’s Works are read, or his Name remembered, that of *Abney* ought not to be forgotten.

In the Year 1728. the Universities of *Edinburgh* and *Aberdeen* in *Scotland*, did, in a most respectful Manner, without his
Know-

Knowledge, confer the Degree of Doctor in Divinity on him, and on some others of his Brethren.

His last Sickness was rather a Decay of Nature, wore out with Age and Labours, than any particular Distemper: Therefore it was lingering and long; the Springs of Life were unbending by Degrees, till at length the earthly Tabernacle fell quite to Decay, and was *put off* by the immortal Spirit. And thus after a Life of eminent Service, both of God, and his Generation, he fell asleep in Jesus, *November 25, 1748.* in the Seventy-fifth Year of his Age.

It would require a masterly Hand to draw the Portrait of this great Man, in its full Proportion, and proper Colours. A Task, I was never equal to: and am least of all now, when, I doubt not, but your Hearts will in some Measure tell you, what mine feels upon the mention of his Name, and upon calling the Remembrance of him to Mind. However I will endeavour to present you with an Imperfect Sketch of some of the Principal Features.

The natural Strength of his Genius, which he cultivated and improved by a very considerable Acquaintance with the most celebrated Writers, both Ancient and Modern, had enriched his Mind with a large and uncommon Store of just Sentiments, and useful Knowledge of various Kinds. For his

Soul was too noble and large, to be confined within narrow Limits. He could not be content to leave any Path of Learning untried; nor to rest in a total Ignorance of any Science, the Knowledge of which might be for his own Improvement, or might any Ways tend to enlarge his Capacity of being useful to others.

Though that which gave him the most remarkable Preheminence was the Extent and Sublimity of his Imagination; yet how few have excelled, or even equalled him in Quickness of Apprehension, and Solidity of Judgment? And having also a faithful Memory to retain what he collected from the Labours of others, he was able to pay it back again into the common Treasury of Learning with a large Increase. I question whether any Author before him did ever appear with Reputation on such a Variety of Subjects, as he has done, both as a Prose-Writer, and a Poet. However this I may venture to say, that there is no Man now living of whose Works so many have been dispersed, both at Home and Abroad, that are in such constant Use, and translated into such a Variety of Languages; many of which will, I doubt not, remain more durable Monuments of his great Talents, than any representation I can make of them, though it were to be graven on Pillars of Brass. Thus did he shine as an ingenious Man, and a Scholar.

But

But we are further to observe him in a more exalted Point of View, for our Instruction and Imitation. I mean as a Christian, in which Character he shone brightest of all; and it is hard to say, what Grace or Virtue was most conspicuous in him, and most Characteristic of him.

Pure and undissembled Piety was the settled Habit and constant Dress of his Mind. And though he loved and enjoyed much Retirement, yet did he not thereby contract any thing of an affected Stiffness, or monkish Austerity; but on the contrary, the Satisfaction and Pleasure, that he found in Communion with God in Solitude, made him the more easy and chearful in his Converse with Men, and seemed to enlighten his very Countenance

His Humility was like a deep Shade, if I may so express it, that set off his other Graces and Virtues, and made them shine with a brighter Lustre. And as this Grace had a mighty Influence on his Heart and Temper, so it had no little Effect in forming his Sentiments. For he never thought he could be laid too low, as a Creature or a Sinner, that he might do Honour to the Perfections and Grace of God: and from hence, in a great Measure, arose that high Esteem which he had for the Christian Dispensation, which is so apparently calculated to exalt God, and to humble Man. Nor was his Humility less conspicuous in his outward

ward Carriage and Behaviour towards others. From hence flowed that Condescension and Gentleness, that Humanity and Kindness, that could not but endear him to all, who had the Pleasure of conversing with him ; and which rendered him truly venerable, in a much higher Degree, than all the Honours and Applauses he received from the World. In short, his Description of this Grace, which he has so beautifully exemplified in the Character of *St. Paul**, seems to be but a Transcript of his own Heart and Life.

In close Connection with the Grace of Humility were to be seen his Candour and Charity, for which he was remarkably eminent. The Love that glowed in his Heart to his Saviour, constrained him cordially to embrace all, whom he esteemed to be his genuine Disciples ; and no Party-Names, nor Variety of Sentiments in Matters of doubtful Disputation, nor of Practice in Modes of Worship, could divide him in Affection from such as he had Reason to Hope *loved our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity*. Accordingly he maintained a free and friendly Correspondence with Christians of different Parties and Denominations. Though he judged the Principles of the Moderate Nonconformists
most

* Humility represented in the Character of *St. Paul*.
By *I. Watts, D. D.*

most favourable to Christian Liberty and the Rights of Conscience, and their Forms of Worship most agreeable to the Simplicity of the Gospel; yet he had a high Veneration for the Persons and Writings of many in the Established Church, as many of them, both in higher and lower Stations, had for him and his Writings. And I speak it to the distinguished Honour and Praise of some very Reverend Personages of that Communion, as well as to his, that they frequently presented him with their Works, and accepted of his in return; on which, as well as on other Occasions, very serious and affectionate Letters have passed between them, for the strenghtening each others Hands in the Cause of our common Christianity.

What his Sentiments were, as to the peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel, you, who have statedly attended on his Ministry, well know; and none need be ignorant, who will peruse his Writings.

Though he occasionally engaged in the Controversies of the Day, it was evidently with a View to heal and reconcile Disputes amongst Christians, rather than to make Profelytes to any Party; and however any may in some Matters differ from him in Judgment, all must allow, that he wrote on such Occasions, with such a Spirit of Meekness and Love, as is truly instructive and exemplary.

Nor

Nor did Love and Goodness only dwell in his Heart, but flowed out from thence in Liberal and beneficent Actions. For I am credibly informed that from the Time he was received into *Sir Thomas Abney's* Family, he constantly devoted a fifth Part of his Income to charitable Uses.

It is no Wonder, that a Man thus richly furnished with Gifts and Graces, was an admired Preacher. Though his Stature was low, and *his bodily Presence but weak*, yet *his Preaching was Weighty and Powerful*. There was a certain Dignity and Spirit in his very Aspect, when he appeared in the Pulpit, that commanded Attention and Awe; and when he Spoke, such Strains of truly Christian Eloquence flowed from his Lips, and these so apparently animated with Zeal for God, and the most tender Concern for your Souls, and their everlasting Salvation; as one would think, could not be easily slighted or resisted.

Though his Publick Labours for your Good, were frequently interrupted by Sickness, yet was he not, even in those Intervals, laid wholly aside from his Usefulness. For not only was his Exemplary Patience and Resignation to the Will of God in those Seasons of his Suffering, very instructive; but some of the finest and most useful Productions of his Pen, as particularly a good Part of his *Imitation of the Psalms of David*,
owe

owe their Birth to those Seasons of constrained Retirement.

In his last Sickness the active and sprightly Powers of his Nature failed him, that is, they were gradually doing so for two or three Years before his Descease; yet his Trust in God, through Jesus the Mediator, remained unshaken to the last. He has been heard to say, " I bless God, I can lie down with
 " Comfort at Night, not being solicitous
 " whether I awake in this World or ano-
 " ther." And again, " I should be glad to read
 " more, yet not in order to be more confirmed
 " in the Truth of the Christian Religion, or
 " in the Truth of its Promises; for I believe
 " them enough to venture an Eternity on
 " them." When he was almost worn out, and broken down, by his Infirmities, he observed in Conversation with a Friend, that
 " he remembered an aged Minister used to
 " say, that the most learned and know-
 " ing Christians, when they come to die,
 " have only the same plain Promises of the
 " Gospel for their Support, as the common
 " and unlearned: And so, said he, I find
 " it. It is the plain Promises of the Gospel
 " that are my Support, and I bless God,
 " they are plain Promises, that do not re-
 " quire much Labour and Pains to under-
 " stand them; for I can do nothing now,
 " but look into my Bible for some Promise
 " to support me, and live upon that." When

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he has found his Spirit tending to Impatience, and ready to complain, that he could only lead a mere Animal Life; he would check himself thus. "The Business of a Christian is to bear
 " the Will of God, as well as to do it. If I
 " were in Health, I could only be doing
 " *that*, and *that* I may do now. The best
 " Thing in Obedience, is a Regard to the
 " Will of God, and the Way to that is to
 " get our Inclinations and Aversions as much
 " mortified as we can." With such a calm and peaceful Mind, with such a blessed and lively Hope, did this faithful Servant of Christ wait for his Master's Summons, till the long-wished for Period came; and then he went to *rest from his Labours*, where *his Works follow him*.

And now, that you may be *Followers of him, who through Faith and Patience inherits the Promises*, let me leave a serious Word of Address with you, who are the Members of this Church, and with others, that have been used to attend on Dr. WATTS's Ministry: Which is, that you would seriously think upon that Rule of the future Judgment, which, the Judge himself hath informed you of, Luke xii. 48. *Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required*. I would therefore intreat you to consider, what may be reasonably expected from you, and what will be required of you, who have enjoyed the Ministry of your deceased

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ceased Pastor. Whenever you remember him, (and I am persuaded you will never forget him, while the Power of Memory shall last.) Remember also that you have been blessed with the ministerial Labours of one of the greatest and best of Men.



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A FUNERAL

one of the greatest and best of Africa.

A
Funeral Oration,

Spoken over the

G R A V E

Of the late Reverend

Dr. ISAAC WATTS,

By **SAMUEL CHANDLER.**

WE here commit to the Ground the venerable Remains of one, who being intrusted with many excellent Talents, by him who is the Giver of every good and perfect Gift, chearfully and unweariedly employed them, as a faithful Steward of the manifold Grace of God, in his Master's Service; approving himself as a Minister of Christ, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Distresses, by Purity, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Armour of Righteousness, by Honour and Dishonour, by Evil-report and Good-report; and who amidst various Trials from
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from within and from without, was continued by the kind Providence of God, and the powerfull Supports of his Grace, to a good old Age, honoured and beloved by all Parties, retaining his Usefulness till he had just *finished his Course*, and being at last favoured, according to his own Wishes and Prayers, with an easy Dismission from the Labours of his Life, into that peaceful State of good Men, which commences immediately after Death. Oh, how delightful is that Voice from Heaven, which hath thus pronounced: *Blessed are the Dead, that die in the Lord. Yes saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.*

Could we gratify our own wishes, and could the Prayers and Tears of the Saints of God prevail, would we not gladly preserve amongst us, and lengthen out the Date of Life, far beyond the common Period of Mortality, to those excellent and worthy Servants of God, whom his Goodness hath liberally endowed with distinguished Abilities and answerable Inclinations, for extensive Service to Mankind; for explaining the sacred Truths of divine Revelation, for shewing their Importance, and directing to the practical Improvement of them; for displaying the Riches of divine Grace in a Redeemer, affectionately *beseeking Sinners to become reconciled to God*, accept his offered Mercy,

Mercy, embrace his promises ; and *present themselves a living Sacrifice to God, which is their reasonable Service* : Especially if they have lived the Doctrines they have preached, possessed the Graces they have recommended, practised those substantial Virtues they have enforced on others, by the Authority of the most high God, the Love of Christ, and the amiable Example that he gave by *always doing the Things that pleased God*; and by thus *fulfilling their Ministry*, and the powerful Charms of a long, undissembled, substantial, unblemished Piety, have been the honoured Instruments of God, in *opening Mens Eyes, and turning them, from Darkness unto Light, that they might receive the Forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance amongst them that are sanctified by Faith in Christ*.

Persons thus employed, thus prospered of God, how highly are they favoured by the kind Disposer of the various Conditions and Stations of Men ! How should we rejoice in their Usefulness whilst Living, and how precious should be their Memories after Death ! Such Characters, methinks, should soften and disarm the Rage of Malice, stop the invenomed Mouth of Defamation and Slander, and convert even Envy itself into an holy generous Emulation of being and doing what they were and did.

The Ministry they exercise, and the Example they give, is a common Blessing to the
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the Church of God; and whilst Religion shall retain its Truth and Value, and secure any real Interest in the Affections of Men, they will not fail of a due share of Esteem, and their Employment will be accounted Honourable and Useful, whatever may be the Reproaches thrown on them, or the Contempt with which their Office is treated by the Ignorant, Prejudiced, or Vicious. For what can be a nobler Service, than that which is calculated for curing the Enmity of Mens Hearts to him, who is the Source of Perfection, and the Fountain of Happiness; and for rooting out of their Natures those Seeds of Anger, Resentment, Bitterness and Wrath towards one another, which prevent the Entrance, and obstruct the Growth of that Peace and Joy, to which God himself calls us by the Gospel of his Son? And how eminently are they fitted for this Benevolent and God-like Service, who know the Importance of Truth, and the Worth of Charity; who dare to speak what they think the Truth, but who have learnt always to *speak it in Love*; who can be Enemies to Men's Vices, without Enmity to their Persons; who can censure grosser Errours, without condemning Men for lesser involuntary Mistakes; who are themselves formed into that Goodness and Gentleness, that Forbearance and Patience, that Candour and Moderation, that Humility and Meekness, that
are

are the genuine Ornaments of the Christian Temper, and which, by whomsoever they are put on, add that persuasive Force to Instruction that nothing else can give it, and carry that commanding Influence, which few ingenuous Minds will easily resist the Power of.

No Wonder therefore that Men, endow-
ed with these Excellencies, should be in their
Stations eminently useful to others, and that
in Consequence of it, they should enjoy *the*
Comforts of God within themselves, live above
the Fears of Mortality, and *rejoice in Hope*
even under the nearest Approaches of Death.
For what can distress them, who have been
taught of God to *save themselves*, and made
successful by God to *save others*; who being
formed into the divine Image by that Gospel
they have preached, are fitted for that Sight of
God which the Gospel promises; who by
their love of Truth are made meet for that
happy State, in which *all that is imperfect*
shall be done away, and they shall know even
as they are known; and who by the Preva-
lence of *Love without Dissimulation*, and
the habitual Exercise of Charity pure and
fervent, have that Disposition deeply impres-
sed on their Minds, which shall hereafter
unite the Saints to God as their common
Portion, be the Bond of an eternal Friend-
ship amongst all *the Heirs of Salvation*; and
triumph for ever in the Regions of Light and
F Bliss,

Bliss, when Faith shall be extinguished by immediate Vision, and Hope fail, and give Way to all the stronger Pleasures of full and uninterrupted Enjoyment.

To live in Friendship with such as these is highly desirable, and a real Honour in the present Life, and 'tis impossible not to wish to be their Associates and Companions in a better Life. For there must be a Period to their Virtues and Usefulness here, that they may be transplanted into more friendly Regions. Heaven claims them as its due. The Mansions of Glory are prepared for their Reception, and even the Saviour's own Reward would be incomplete, were they not to be where he is, to *enter into his Joy*, and to be formed *into the Image of his Glory*.

'Tis true indeed, that *the Treasure*, with which God is here pleased to enrich them, is placed *in earthen Vessels*, and the greater the Treasure, the more frail and feeble often times the Vessel that contains it; *that so the excellency of the power* which attends their Ministry may appear to be of God, and not of them; and that *the abundant Grace* communicated to others by their Means, might, thro' the thanksgiving of many, redound to God's greater Glory. And for this Cause they faint not in their sacred Work, but though their outward Man gradually decays and perishes, yet their inward Man is renewed Day by Day; whilst

whilst they look not at the Things which are seen which are temporal, but at the Things which are not seen, which are eternal.

And though at last they must lye down in the Corruption of the Grave, and *these earthly Houses of their Tabernacles* be intirely dissolved; yet, as *they sleep in Jesus*, and enter into that Rest which remains for the People of God; that Rest which puts an End to all their Trials, Pains and Services, to them sweet and refreshing, as the calm and gentle Slumbers of the Night, to those who are wearied and worn out with the long Labours of the Day; Death shall not have a perpetual Dominion over them. *God will redeem their Souls from the Power of the Grave. He will receive them. In the Morning they shall awake, and triumph over the grand Destroyer.* Their special Relation to and Interest in *the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls*, is the firm Security of their Resurrection. His Power shall command them into a new Life, His Hand form them for an immortal Duration.

How joyful, how happy will the Circumstances of that Revival be! With what high Satisfaction, with what exalted Pleasure will they view themselves, and wonder to see, how gloriously different, how changed from their former selves, their Appearance shall then be! When what is *sown in Weakness shall be raised in Power*; when they shall

have Beauty for Ashes, the Oyl of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness; when those Dis-tempered dying Bodies, that here oppressed and tempted them, and were a dayly exercise of their Faith and Patience, shall be fashioned like the glorious Body of their exalted Saviour; when this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, this Mortal shall put on Immortality, and Death shall be finally swallowed up in Victory! How greatly will they then rejoice in the Lord, and their Souls be joyful in their God, when he shall cloath them with Garments of Salvation, and cover them with a Robe of Righteousness, and when thus prepared for an immediate Approach to God, the Saviour shall present them holy and blameless before his Father's Presence with exceeding Joy!

Nor will it be *the least* Addition to their Happiness and triumph in that Day, to find that their Ministry hath not been *an unprofitable* and useless one; when they shall behold those amongst whom they laboured, appear with themselves amongst the faithful Followers of the Lamb of God, saved from the Corruptions of the World, and the Ruines of Sin; appear with them as the glorious Evidences of their own Fidelity, and *the incontestible Proofs* of the *Validity* and *Acceptableness* of their Ministry to their God. How high will the Tide of Pleasure then rise!

rise! What Heart can conceive, what Imagination paint out the lively solid Joys resulting from the blessed Reunion of the faithful Pastor and his beleiving Flock! How will they congratulate each other! He, that he was made the Instrument of the Grace of God in their Recovery and Conversion! They, that the Word he preached became *the Power of God to their Salvation!* And both joyn in the most grateful Acknowledgments to him that *gave the Increase*, and so nourished and prospered *the incorruptible Seed*, that was sown in their Hearts, as finally to produce the glad Harvest of eternal Life and Glory. Remember therefore *those faithful Guides, who have had the Rule over you, who have spoken to you the Word of God, whose Faith follow, considering the End of their Conversation; that you may be their Hope, their Joy, and their Crown of rejoicing, in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming.*



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